

COLLECTABLE COMPONENT GAMING APPARATUS AND METHOD

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS:

This application claims the benefit of United States Provisional Patent Application No.
5 60/443,442, filed on January 29, 2003.

TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates to gaming technology, and more particularly to collectable trading games comprising turn based combat role playing and skill game features.

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Collectable toys are known in the art, as are role playing games; turn based combat games; games involving physical skills; and games having game pieces where the game pieces are intended to contact one another, such as marbles.

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However, as most toys or games do not remain popular for long periods of time, especially toys or games designed for children, there exists a continual need to innovate and create new toys to satisfy demand. There also exists an additional need to create games which maintain popularity for longer periods of time, thus extending the product's life cycle.

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One method of perpetuating popularity is to allow for new gaming components to be acquired by gamers and integrated into their gaming activities. Such a method has been employed in some games centered around trading cards. However, such games tend to be only suitable for two persons, and moreover, tend to be simplistic.

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In general, role playing and skill-based games restrict the game participants to those persons who were present at the beginning of a game. For example, in the known Risk™ combat and world conquest game, it is impossible for players arriving after the beginning of the game to enter in the middle of play and participate. However, real world play often encounters

5 situations where additional playmates or participants arrive at a gaming location after a game has begun. Restrictions on mid-game entry thus are frustrating for these participants who must wait on the sidelines, and this frustration can induce them to disrupt the game.

What is thus needed in the art is a gaming apparatus and method which, by combining

10 features of the various game types listed above, can allow players to experience multiple aspects of various game types while retaining the ease and simplicity of playing a single game.

What is further needed in the art is a gaming apparatus that is not static; that can allow for

15 new components to be added in future versions of a game, but without unduly altering the basic nature of the game. Thus, players can be continually interested in a game as they collect new gaming components that can be used with it.

What is further needed in the art is a trading card type game that can be played by two or

20 more players.

Finally, what is needed in the art is a gaming method by which late arrivals can be easily integrated into a game without diminishing the gaming experience of the original participants.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

- In exemplary embodiments of the present invention, a game apparatus includes game pieces, also known as Pods in one embodiment, having multiple faces depicting game piece attributes, a game piece dispensing and storage device, also known as a Pod Chamber in one embodiment, a game board, a barrier device, an information booklet, also known as an Info Station, Stickards for constructing game pieces, a Collector's Poster, at least one Pod Launch pad, and a Carrier/Dispenser/Magnifier used in conjunction with defined game rules to determine the outcome of battles between players.
- 10 Stickards are a cross between a set of stickers and a trading card. Stickards can contain game character attributes and other information. Stickards are used particularly in connection with the Pods, the Info Station and the Collector's Poster. Preferably, some of the stickers located on the Stickards correspond to attributes of the Pods, and are used by players in conjunction with the assembly of Pods. Also preferably, at least one of the stickers located on the
- 15 Stickards contains character information and can be used in conjunction with the Info Station and/or the Collector's Poster.

In exemplary embodiments of the present invention Pods can be small customized cubes or other "micro 3-D trading objects" which can be rolled around and launched at each other in accordance with various defined methods of game play as a function of certain user defined parameters. In exemplary embodiments of the present invention Pods can be stored in a Pod Chamber and launched via a Pod Launch Pad.

The game piece dispensing and storage device desirably functions as: (i) a storage facility holding all the Pods a player needs to play the game, (ii) a game component where during the

game game pieces can be placed in the dispensing and storage device showing out of action “Crashed” side up, thus becoming indistinguishable one from the other and thus allowing players to “deal out” Pods to one another, like dealing cards, and (iii) a fashion accessory whereby using, for example, an attachable carry strap with a clip, the game piece dispensing 5 and storage device can be worn from clothing or a knapsack and used to transport game pieces. A game piece dispensing and storage device thus used can also, for example, maintain the visibility of the game and induce further interest in it.

The information booklet or, in one embodiment, the Info Station desirably provides a place to 10 hold the game stickers and/or cards and can serve, for example, as a library of statistics and other information used in game play.

The Collector’s Poster preferably includes game characters identified thereon as well as slots or the like to receive character icon stickers having an associative relationship therewith.

15 The flexible battle barrier (which can be housed in its own container) can be, for example, used to define an area of game play such that player’s can create a playing zone anywhere, such as for example, at school or at a park, where no game board is available.

20 The Game Board preferably comprises concentric circles defining areas where particular groups of Pods associated with such areas are allocated special abilities and/or attributes.

25 The Carrier/Dispenser/Magnifier preferably functions as a game accessory providing, for example, storage and viewing for multiple game pieces, wherein the graphical details of one or more Pods can be viewed in magnified form. Desirably and in accordance with preferred

exemplary embodiments of the invention, the Carrier/Dispenser/Magnifier can allow for the viewing of special messages imprinted upon the Pods which are not easily visible to the naked eye.

- 5 In exemplary embodiments of the present invention, game rules can enable up to six players to battle preselected characters against one another in a turn based, hands-on, aim-and-fire, mêlée. A unique feature of the game according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention is that players can join in at any time. Additionally, new players can play the game with a preselected subset of the game apparatus.

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In an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, an apparatus and method are provided for playing a collectable trading game having turn based combat role playing and skill game features.

- 15 Other objects and advantages of the present invention will in part be obvious and will in part be apparent from the specification.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1A and 1B are side views of an example character game piece 1 according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

- 20 Figs. 2A and 2B are side views of an exemplary battle game piece 8 according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 3A is an example front surface illustration of a character Stickard according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 3B is a front surface illustration of a regular Stickard according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Figs. 4A and 4B depict an exemplary game piece storage and dispensing device according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

5 Fig. 5 is a top view of an example game board according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 6A is a top view of an exemplary gaming boundary according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

10 Fig. 6B is a cross-sectional view of an exemplary gaming boundary according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 7 is an angled side view of an example carrier/magnifier/dispenser according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 8A is a top view of an example game piece launch pad according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

15 Fig. 8B is a front side view of an example game piece launch pad according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 8C is a back side view of an example game piece launch pad according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

20 Figs. 9(A) -(E) are process flow charts depicting an exemplary two-player method of play according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention; and

Figs. 10(A) - (J) are process flow charts depicting an exemplary multi-player method of play according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention comprises the various steps and the relation of one or more of such steps with respect to each of the others, and embodies features of construction, combinations of elements, and arrangement of parts which are adapted to effect such steps, all as 5 exemplified in the following detailed disclosure. The scope of the present invention is as defined in the claims which follow this description.

The present invention relates to turn based combat games, trading games including turn based combat role playing features, and collectable trading games which include turn based combat 10 role playing and exercise of skill. In exemplary embodiments of the present invention players can experience multiple aspects of various different game types while enjoying the benefits of playing a single multidimensional game.

Turn based combat games typically use a rule set to determine the outcome of battles 15 between players. Typically, each player can decide upon various actions and can take such actions during their turn. Conventionally, players implement their strategic decisions in turns according to a predetermined order of players.

In exemplary embodiments of the present invention, (i) game rules, preferably organized into 20 two separate sets of multilevel rules known as “Mini Rules” and “Big Rules”, each set having two-player and multi-player rules; (ii) character and battle game pieces, preferably “Character Pods” and “Biometals”, respectively; (iii) a game piece dispensing and storage device, preferably a “Pod Chamber”; (iv) a game board, preferably a “Battle Mat”; (v) a barrier, preferably a “Battle Barrier”; (vi) a game piece launch pad, preferably a “Pod Launch Pad”;

(vii) a Carrier/Dispenser/Magnifier and (viii) an information booklet, preferably an “Info Book”; all of which are described in greater detail below, can be used.

In exemplary embodiments of the present invention game pieces having six cube faces, known as “Pods” are used. Cube faces can, for example, depict attributes, skills or status of a given game piece. Such attributes can be used, for example, in conjunction with exemplary game rules to determine the outcome of battles between and among players. Such game pieces, in exemplary embodiments of the present invention, can, for example, come in two forms. Character game pieces (two-player character Pods) used in conjunction with battle game pieces (Pods) in a two-player game and battle game pieces used in either a two-player or a multi-player game.

In exemplary embodiments of the present invention, character game pieces can display attributes or skills of intelligence, speed, power, gadget, special ability or additional ability (Pod Text). Desirably, such attributes or skills of intelligence, speed, power, gadget, and special ability can be assigned numerical values. In exemplary embodiments of the present invention, numerical values associated with attributes or skills of intelligence, speed, power, gadget, and special ability and the content and effect of the additional ability (Pod Text) can vary between different character game pieces. As shown in Figs. 1A and 1B, such attributes and skills can be, for example, depicted on a character game piece 1 cube face for attributes or skills in intelligence 2, speed 3, power 4, gadget 5, special ability 6 and additional ability (Pod Text) 7. It is noted that particular depictions of attributes, skills, and play status may be each located on any face of the cube. In exemplary embodiments of the present invention conventions can be created dictating that a gamer assemble each cube such that each attribute

or skills category (e.g., intelligence, speed, power, etc.) is always located on the same face for any cube.

In exemplary embodiments of the present invention as shown in Figs. 2A and 2B, battle game
5 pieces can display attributes or skills of defense, damage, attack, behavior, additional ability
(Pod Text), as well as an out of action status (crashed). Desirably, the attributes or skills of
defense, damage, attack, and behavior can be assigned numerical values. In exemplary
embodiments the numerical values for attributes or skills of defense, damage, attack,
behavior as well as the content and effect of an additional ability (Pod Text), can vary
10 between different battle game pieces. As shown in Figs. 2A and 2B, such attributes, skills,
and play status are preferably depicted on a battle game piece 8 cube face for attributes or
skills of defense 9, damage 10, attack 11, behavior 12, additional ability (Pod Text) 13, or out
of action status (crashed) 14. It is understood that particular depictions of attributes, skills,
and play status may be each located on any face of the cube.

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Stickards, in accordance with the present invention, and as depicted in Figures 3A and 3B,
are preferably cards which comprise stickers corresponding to the applicable attributes, skills
and play status of individual character game pieces 1 and battle game pieces 8, as described
above. Desirably, such stickers can be used by a player to construct game pieces by placing
20 them upon the cube faces of game pieces. Alternatively, game pieces may be pre-assembled.
Preferably, each Stickard can correspond to a particular game piece. In exemplary
embodiments of the present invention, stickers from corresponding individual Stickards can
be used to construct individual character game pieces 1 and battle game pieces 8.

Additionally, individual Stickards can also carry at least one information sticker 22 with descriptive matter and statistics applicable to a corresponding character or battle game piece

8. In exemplary embodiments of the present invention, at least one information sticker 22 can be used in conjunction with an information booklet, where each individual character and

5 battle game piece 8 is assigned a page where the user can place the information sticker 22 for purpose of collecting, viewing and reference.

Fig. 3A depicts an exemplary character Stickard associated with an exemplary character “Dallas.” Desirably, Stickards corresponding to character game pieces 1, or character

10 Stickards 15, can comprise stickers associated with attributes or skills of intelligence 16, speed 17, power 18, gadget 19, special ability 20 and an additional ability (Pod Text) 21.

Fig. 3B depicts an exemplary battle Stickard associated with “Boss Skyline.” Stickards corresponding to battle game pieces 8, or regular Stickards 23, preferably carry stickers for

15 attributes or skills of defense 24, damage 25, attack 26, behavior 27, additional ability (Pod Text) 28, and out of action status (crashed) 29.

A game piece dispensing and storage device, in exemplary embodiments of the present invention, can store and dispense game pieces during play. Battle game pieces 8 are preferably stored with a face which is common to all battle game pieces 8 facing up so that

20 players cannot see which battle game pieces 8 another player possesses. Also, by storing battle game pieces 8 in the above manner, players may randomly distribute game pieces to each other.

Referring to Fig. 4A, a game piece dispensing and storage device 30 preferably comprises a

25 substantially spherical outer shell 31, divided into two substantially even halves 32, 33

desirably interconnecting via screw thread 34 and capable of being easily separated. Each substantially even half can have an interior comprising one or more form fitted game piece holders 35 which can, for example, hold one or more game pieces. A game piece holder can desirably have indentations 36 which can, for example, allow for easy manual removal of the
5 game pieces.

With reference to Fig. 4B, a game piece dispensing and storage device 30 can also, for example, have an attaching point on its outer surface for a length of cord 37 comprising an indentation 38 on its outer surface and a bar 39 spanning the indentation 38, where the bar
10 preferably leaves sufficient open space such that the length of cord 40 may be looped through and attached to the bar. In exemplary embodiments of the present invention there can be a “bowl” structure under the bar such that when the thread is pushed down under one side of the bar, it strikes the bowl and is pushed back up the other side, simplifying the threading process. The substantially spherical outer shell 31 desirably has at least one substantially flat
15 area 41 on its outer surface typically surrounding the indentation 38 which preferably prevents the game piece dispensing and storage device 30 from rolling unless sufficient force is applied.

Referring to Figure 5, an exemplary game board 42 which may be rigid or flexible, can have,
20 for example, multiple player starting positions 43 which can surround a play area 44. Preferably the player starting positions 43 are shaped to correspond to one or more game piece Launch Pads described below. Desirably, two of the player starting positions 43 facing opposite each other are labeled as player one and player two, respectively, and can be used in conjunction with exemplary game rules for two player games. There can be, in exemplary
25 embodiments of the present invention, defined areas of a game board where player one and

- player two must launch a game piece. The play area can be, for example, divided into more than one circles, desirably a first circle 45, a second concentric circle 46 surrounding the first circle, a third concentric circle 47 surrounding the second concentric circle 46, and a fourth concentric circle 48 surrounding the third concentric circle 47, all of which can function in accordance with game rules, as described below, and can represent, for example, shallow water, deep water, land and air. Alternatively, where no game board is available or desired, play area can be surrounded by a circular flexible tube 49, as depicted in Figure 6. Battle game pieces 8 can be launched onto play area 44 via physical force such as, for example, by flicking, flipping or tapping.
- Referring now to Figure 6, an exemplary barrier 49 can preferably be used in place of the game board 42, to define an area of game play such that player's can create a playing zone anywhere, such as for example, at school or at a park, where no game board is available. Such barrier 49 can preferably be composed of a circular string or flexible tubing which can form a circular zone of play.
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- Referring now to Figure 7, a carrier/magnifier/dispenser 50 in accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the present invention is shown. Such object can preferably store, allow magnified viewing of and dispense game pieces. In an exemplary embodiment of the present invention a carrier/magnifier/dispenser can comprise cylinder 51, having a rectangular side opening 52, at the bottom of which rectangular side opening is a lever/dispenser 53. A dome shaped top portion 54 can be attached to the top of the cylinder 51, for example. The dome shaped top portion 54 can contain a multitude of substantially oval curved indentations 55, the bottom of each holding clear a magnifying lens 56. The magnifying lens 56 can, for example, allow a user to magnify game pieces stored within the cylinder 51, the cylinder 51 having sockets or other holding devices known in the art located on a bottom portion 57 of

said cylinder which can serve to secure stored game pieces. The bottom portion 57 also rotates which can allow for loading and dispensing of game pieces via the rectangular side opening 52.

- 5 Referring to Figs. 8(A)-(C), a launch pad 58 comprises a substantially semi-circular flat base 59 having a rounded lip 60 which runs along the circular edge of the substantially semi-circular flat base 59. The launch pad 58 allows a player to launch a game piece into the play area 44 by placing the game piece onto the launch pad 58 and applying manual pressure to flip the game piece into the air in the direction of the play area 44. The rounded lip 60 may
- 10 have ridges, obstructions, angled surfaces or the like which can impart differing initial velocity, trajectory direction and spin onto a launched game piece.

Methods and apparatus for playing a two-player version and a multi-player version of a collectable trading game including turn based combat role playing and features of games of skill according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, can be known as the “Biometals™ Trading Pod Game.” Such an exemplary game embodiment can use either a two player rule set (two player rules) or a multi-player rule set (multi player rules) as described below.

- 20 **Example 1 - Two Player Play**

A method and system for playing a two-player version of the collectable trading game including turn based combat role playing and features of games of skill of the present invention, known in an exemplary embodiment of the present invention as the “Biometals™ Trading Pod Game” is described below. The two-player version of the Biometals™ Trading Pod Game can comprise numerous levels of rules which add layers of complexity in a

cumulative or progressive manner. Thus, in exemplary embodiments players can choose between various rule sets differing in complexity.

Desirably, an exemplary method of play using two-player level one rules can comprise a first
5 step of each player selecting character and battle game pieces 8, a second step of each player launching the selected battle game pieces 8, a third step of each player in turn rolling their selected character game piece 1 to determine a number of action points available to that player and then choosing and completing their actions, and a fourth step of scoring points to determine the winner, all of which are described in greater detail below.

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Preferably, the first step of the method of play using two-player level one rules can comprise each player selecting one character and four battle game pieces 8 from one of two game piece groupings, known in a preferred embodiment as good and evil game pieces. The second step of the above method comprises each of two players launching their previously selected four
15 battle game pieces 8 into the play area 44. The third step of the above method comprises each of two players in turn rolling their character game piece 1 to determine the number of action points available for their use in that turn, and then choosing from among the following actions: move, battle, wake up, and/or rescue, where in a preferred embodiment the player using evil game pieces goes first. Preferably, each action chosen expends one action point,
20 such that a player may engage in actions until he/she runs out of action points.

The move action allows a player to change the position of their launched battle game piece on the play area 44, or the cube face of the battle game piece which is face up, or the location of one of their opponents battle game pieces 8 which is displaying a crashed status.

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The battle action allows a player to battle one of their battle game pieces 8 against an opponent's game piece. To use the battle action a player must have a battle game piece in play which displays the battle game piece cube face for attributes or skills in attack 11. The battle action occurs via a sequence of steps as described below in multi-player rules.

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The wake up action is used by a player to bring one of their battle game pieces 8 which are stored in the game piece dispensing and storage device 30 into play. The player using the wake up action is not allowed to choose the battle game piece brought into play, instead the battle game pieces 8 are stored in the game piece dispensing and storage device 30 with the 10 battle game piece cube face for an out of action status 14. The player's opponent may also spin the game piece dispensing and storage device 30 in order to further ensure random selection of the battle game piece.

The rescue action is used by a player to remove one of their battle game pieces 8 from the 15 play area -- and place it into the game piece dispensing and storage device 30.

Preferably, the method of play using two-player level one rules penalizes players who do not choose at least one action during their turn other than the move action.

20 A player's turn ends when they have used all of their action points, at which time the second player's turn begins. A player wins the game under the two-player rules when he/she has removed all of their opponent's battle game pieces 8 from the play area 44 via victory in at least one battle action.

Desirably, the method of play using two-player level two rules comprises the steps of the level one rules with the following additions: players now start the game with nine battle game pieces 8, with four of the battle game pieces 8 being dealt out randomly from the opponent's game piece dispensing and storage device 30; the move action described above does not cost

5 any action points if the battle game piece is displaying the additional ability (Pod Text) 13 face up, however it costs two action points to move a game piece displaying an out of action status; the wake up action now requires that any battle game piece woken up by the wake up action described above have a behavior 12 value greater than the number of action points a player has; the battle action now follows a level two multi-player rule set described below

10 including the rules for hitting the wrong battle game piece.

At level two, score is determined by using a survival bonus for each battle game piece in play and in a player's game piece dispensing and storage device 30. The survival bonus is a numerical value located on the battle game piece's cube face for additional ability (Pod Text)

15 13.

Desirably, the method of play using two-player level three rules comprises the methods and steps of the level one and two rules with the following additions: a repair action and a team power action, which preferably occur during the third step; the battle action now follows a

20 level three multi-player rule set described below including the rules for hitting the wrong battle game piece; and a player having more than one copy of an individual battle game piece combines them when attacked by the opponent during battle actions.

Preferably the repair action brings a battle game piece which has been knocked out during a

25 battle action, as described hereafter, back into play. In a preferred embodiment an attempted

repair action costs three action points. The player rolls their character game piece 1, if the number shown on the character game piece 1 is greater than the knocked out battle game piece's value for damage then the piece is repaired and may be launched back into the game as described in the first step.

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Desirably, the team power action is used where the player has six battle game pieces 8 displaying the same attribute or skill face up. In a preferred embodiment a the team power action costs one action point. The player using the team power action then chooses an opponent's battle game piece showing the same attribute or skill face up. The opponent then picks up the selected battle game piece and launches it back into the play area 44. If the opponent's selected battle game piece lands showing additional ability (Pod Text) face up then the team power action has no effect. However, if the opponent's selected battle game piece lands showing any other attribute or skill face up then the team power action succeeds and the opponent's game piece is knocked out as described hereafter.

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As battle game pieces 8 vary in their individual attributes and skills as described above, it is possible for a player to have a more than one copies of an individual battle game piece. In this event any battle action taken against one of the more than one copies of an individual battle game piece must be repeated against all of the more than one copies of an individual battle game piece, in order for it to be completed. If the attacker wins all actions, then they have knocked out all of the more than one copies of an individual battle game piece. In a preferred embodiment two copies of an individual battle game piece are permitted to be used in the above described manner.

Score at level three is determined as in level two, except that battle game pieces 8 located in a player's game piece dispensing and storage device 30 are not counted.

In an alternative embodiment of the present example, a fourth level may be added to the two-player rules. Desirably, the method, system and components of the present invention using two-player level four rules comprises the methods and steps of the level one, two and three rules with the following additions: a defensive battle game piece stacking, a multiple targeting, an enhanced playsheet interactivity, a battle matrix for battle game pieces 8, a rule for movable launch pads, and a zoned movement.

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In an alternative embodiment of the present example, a fifth level may be added to the two-player rules. Desirably, the method, system and components of the present invention using two-player level five rules comprises the methods and steps of the level one, two, three and four rules with the following additions: a docking battle game piece, a 3d environment playsheet, an extended interactivity, a capture game tactic, a symbiotic battle game piece, an additional behavior rule, and a game missions.

Example 2 - Multi-player Play

Referring now to the flow chart depicted in FIG. 10, a method and system for playing a multi-player version of the collectable trading game including turn based combat role playing and features of games of skill of the present invention, known in a preferred embodiment as the Biometals™ Trading Pod Game is described below. The multi-player version of the Biometals™ Trading Pod Game comprises three levels of rules which add on to each other in a progressive manner.

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Desirably, the method of play using multi-player level one rules comprises a first step of each player selecting battle game pieces 8, a second step of a player whose turn it is determining which battle game piece grouping will be classified as defenders (good or evil in a preferred embodiment); a third step of each player who has a battle game piece classified as a defender launching that battle game piece onto the play area 44; a fourth step of each player who has a battle game piece of the battle game piece grouping not classified as defenders launching at least one of their battle game pieces 8 not classified as defenders against the defending battle game pieces 8; a fifth step, known in a preferred embodiment as battling, of determining the outcome of steps three and four; a sixth step of ending the player's turn, and a seventh step of determining a victory and scoring points.

Preferably, the first step of the level one mutli-player rules comprises each player choosing four battle game pieces 8, two belonging to one grouping of battle game pieces 8 and two belonging to another grouping of battle game pieces 8 , in a preferred embodiment, good and evil. The players the declare their evil battle game pieces 8 and the player with the evil battle game piece having the lowest percentage rating, which in a preferred embodiment is found on the cube face for additional ability (Pod Text) 13, taking a first turn.

In a preferred embodiment the second step of the level one mutli-player rules comprises a player whose turn it is determining which battle game piece grouping will be classified as defenders (good or evil in a preferred embodiment) by notifying the other players which battle game piece grouping will be defending..

Desirably the third step of the level one multi-player rules comprises all players launching their defending battle game pieces 8 determined in step two onto the play area 44. Then, in

step four the players proceed to launch, in a sequence which proceeds from the left of the player with the first turn, their attacking battle game pieces 8 against the defending battle game piece of their choice which initiates battling. Attacking battle game pieces 8 belong to a grouping other than that declared to be the defending group by the player who took the first
5 turn.

Preferably the fifth step, known in a preferred embodiment as battling, occurs when an attacking battle game piece is launched at and hits a defending battle game piece located on the play area 44. An attacking battle game piece is allotted a number of attempts to hit the
10 defending battle game piece equal to the numerical value of its attack attribute. In order to cause a defending battle game piece to be placed out of action, known in a preferred embodiment as crashed, the attacking battle game piece must hit it a number of times equal to the numerical value of the defending battle game piece's face up attribute or skill, known as power in a preferred embodiment.. Under level one battling once a battle game piece
15 becomes crashed it is also knocked out of play and no longer in the game.

Desirably the sixth step, ending a turn, as soon as a battle game piece has been knocked out. The turn ends and all players collect their remaining game pieces from the player area 44. Alternatively, at the end of the turn the players can collect all of their game pieces whether
20 knocked out or not. Play then proceeds to the player to the immediate left of the player having had the last turn and steps one through six are repeated until either the players decide to end the game or there is only one player left with battle game pieces 8 in the play area 44.

Preferably the seventh step, determining victory and scoring points, occurs by each player counting the number of battle game pieces 8 they have knocked out. This becomes their score, should any player's scores be equal a draw is declared.

- 5 In a preferred embodiment, a new player may join at any time by sitting to the immediate right of the player whose turn it is. Also, and preferably, if any battle game piece, except a defending battle game piece lands outside the play area 44 it is considered crashed.

Desirably, the method of play using multi-player level two rules comprises the methods and

- 10 steps of the level one multi-player rules with the following additions:

Players with defending battle game pieces 8 can now initiate the following actions during battle: an accept action, a get help action, a fight back action, and a run away action.

- 15 In a preferred embodiment when a player chooses the accept action battle begins as described in step five.

Desirably, the player may choose the get help action where the player's defending battle game piece shows the cube face for the damage attribute 10 face up. The player may then

- 20 add the numerical values for the damage attribute for all of their battle game pieces 8 which show the cube face for the damage attribute 10 face up to calculate a number and use this number as their power in step five.

Preferably, upon choosing the fight back action the defending battle game piece changes

- 25 places with the attacking battle game piece. The formerly attacking battle game piece is

placed with the cube face for the defense attribute showing face up. Battling now proceeds via the method of step five.

- In a preferred embodiment the player may choose the run away action if their defending
- 5 battle game piece shows the cube face for the behavior 12 attribute -- face up. The player then chooses any other battle game piece on the play area 44 which have a higher numerical value for the cube face for the behavior 12 attribute -- face up; this battle game piece then becomes the defender and battle proceeds according to step five.
- 10 Also in a preferred embodiment, if an attacking battle game piece hits any other battle game piece on the play area 44 other than the defending battle game piece and the battle game piece which was hit is showing a higher numerical value than the attacking battle game piece then the attacking battle game piece is knocked out.
- 15 Additionally, and preferably, a first player may attempt to steal a second player's turn if the first player has an attacking battle game piece with a numerical value for behavior 12 which is higher than the attacking battle game piece of the second player. The first and second players roll their respective attacking battle game pieces. If the first player rolls a higher numerical value then he/she takes the second player's turn. If the result is opposite, the
- 20 second player has the option to knock out the first player's attacking battle game piece and then continue their turn. In a preferred embodiment, a player which is physically located closest to the second player has the option to attempt to steal a turn, should they decline to do so the option passes to the next closest player until a player accepts the option or all have declined to steal the second player's turn.

Victory and scoring is accomplished by adding the behavior 12 attributes for all of the battle game pieces 8 a player has knocked out. The winner has the highest score. In the event of a draw the player who has knocked out the higher of a number of battle game pieces 8 wins, or if the number of battle game pieces 8 knocked out is the same as between two players a draw

5 occurs.

Desirably, the method of play using multi-player level three rules comprises the methods and steps of the level one and level two multi-player rules with the following additions:

defending battle game pieces 8 must be knocked out by the attacking battle game piece after

10 losing a battle, one crashed battle game piece is automatically knocked out when the total number of crashed battle game pieces 8 exceeds three, Pod Text is applicable, and tag teams can be formed by two or more players as described below.

Preferably, a defending battle game piece which has been crashed must now be knocked out

15 by rolling the defending and attacking battle game pieces 8 outside the play area 44. If the attacking battle game piece rolls a higher numerical value than the defending battle game piece is knocked out. However, should the defending battle game piece roll the higher numerical value, then it is not knocked out and instead remains on the play area 44 with the cube face depicting the crashed status face up. The player with the attacking battle game

20 piece must now proceed to attack another defending battle game piece of their choice.

Desirably, a player, upon their turn, must choose to knock out one battle game piece whenever there are four battle game pieces 8 displaying a crashed status face up.

In accordance with a preferred embodiment, the additional ability (Pod Text) 7 is applied to the game. The additional ability (Pod Text) 7 of any battle game pieces 8 which are which are not crashed or knocked out may be applied by any player. Additional ability (Pod Text) 7 comprises written text which alters the parameters of the game set forth herein. For 5 example, it can add bonuses or penalize particular battle game pieces 8 or act in a global manner to alter the attributes of multiple battle game pieces 8.

Preferably, players may form teams when they possess identical individual battle game pieces 8. Players in a tag team may force a second player with an attacking battle game piece to 10 attack another of the identical individual battle game pieces 8 than that selected by the second player. If the attacking battle game piece wins the battle the defending battle game piece originally selected by the second player is considered the loser.

Scoring is preferably accomplished by adding the numerical values for the behavior 12 attribute of all the battle game pieces 8 a player has knocked out and then adding the survival 15 bonus of all of the player's battle game pieces 8 which have not been knocked out.

In an alternative embodiment of the present example, a fourth level may be added to the two-player rules. Desirably, the method, system and components of the present invention using 20 two-player level four rules comprises the methods and steps of the level one, two and three rules with the following additions: a defensive battle game piece stacking, a multiple targeting, an enhanced playsheet interactivity, a battle matrix for battle game pieces 8, a rule for movable launch pads, and a zoned movement.

In an alternative embodiment of the present example, a fifth level may be added to the two-player rules. Desirably, the method, system and components of the present invention using two-player level five rules comprises the methods and steps of the level one, two, three and four rules with the following additions: a docking battle game piece, a 3d environment
5 playsheet, an extended interactivity, a capture game tactic, a symbiotic battle game piece, an additional behavior rule, and a game missions.

Example 3 - Fast Action Multi-player play

Referring now to the flow charts in Figures 10(A)-(J) an exemplary embodiment of the
10 present invention, known as Biometals-X, of a method and system for playing a multi-player version of the collectable trading game including turn based combat role playing and features of games of skill of the present invention, known in a preferred embodiment as the Biometals™ Trading Pod Game is described below. This multi-player version of the Biometals™ Trading Pod Game comprises three levels of rules which add on to each other in
15 a progressive manner.

Desirably, the method of play using multi-player level one rules in accordance with the present example comprises a first step of each player selecting battle game pieces 8; a second step determining which player takes the first turn; a third step of each player completing a
20 turn, which third step further comprises the steps of choosing between a fortify action and a battle action, and resolving any battle, and a sixth step of scoring each player.

Preferably, the first step of the level one multi-player rules of the present example comprises each player choosing four battle game pieces 8. In the second step of the present example,
25 the player who has the battle game piece 8 with a highest rating value launches that battle

game piece into the play area 44 -- the highest rating value can be located on the battle game piece 8 cube face depicting additional ability (Pod Text) 13. Then the player to left of him/her takes the first turn of the game, turns proceeding to other players in this fashion counterclockwise. In the event of a tie the battle game pieces 8 are rolled and the highest

5 scoring player launches first. In the third step of the present example the player whose turn it is can choose to fortify or battle. The fortify action allows the player to launch one battle game piece 8 into the play area 44 without battling whereas the battle option of step three requires the player whose turn it is to hit any battle game piece on the play area. Should the player whose turn it is score a hit they have knocked out the opponent's battle game piece.

10 Should the player whose turn it is miss then their battle game piece is knocked out. All remaining battle game pieces 8 are then removed by their respective players. The winning battle game piece is then launched back into the play area 44 and a new turn begins. Scoring by the method of step six involves giving each player one point for every battle game piece they knock out, alternatively knocking out certain individual battle game pieces 8 can earn a

15 player more than one point. The points are then tallied and the player with the highest score wins.

Desirably, the method of play using multi-player level two rules in accordance with the present example comprises the method of level one with the following additional features: a

20 player may use a special power which increases the attack attribute of their battle game piece 8 by two points and may do so six times during a game; a player may also engage in a restore action wherein they replace a knocked out battle game piece 8 with another battle game piece 8 having a lower survival bonus. After taking a restore action the player then proceeds with step three as in the level one rules. The battle option in level two follows the battle rules for

25 level one of the multi-player rules described in example one.

Desirably, the method of play using multi-player level three rules in accordance with the present example comprises the method of level one and two with the following additional features: all players choose six battle game pieces 8 to play with, and the additional abilities 5 of the battle game pieces 8 function as described on the cube face depicting additional ability (Pod Text) 13. The additional ability (Pod Text) of a particular battle game piece 8 can preferably be used by the player controlling the applicable battle game piece 8 at any time during the game. Additionally, the order of turns can be reversed by choosing a reverse direction option. Desirably and additionally, upon winning a battle the winning player rolls 10 their battle game piece 8 and compares the numerical value against the losing player's damage attribute. If the winning player has rolled high than the damage attribute, the losing player's battle game piece 8 is knocked out, however should the numerical value be lower the losing player's battle game piece 8 is crashed. Scoring is a sin level two with the addition of a player's survival bonus from any of their pods which have not been knocked out. The 15 highest score wins.

Example 4 – Fast Action Two-player play

Referring now to the flow charts in Figures 9(A)-(E), an alternative embodiment of the multi-player rules of Example 3 described above, the following two-player embodiment is played 20 according to rules as described in the multi-player rules of Example 3 above with the following exceptions: (i) each player begins each turn by rolling a character game piece 1 outside the playing zone, (ii) players must battle battle game pieces 8 of another grouping only, and (iii) knocked out battle game pieces 8 remain within the playing zone. Preferably rolling a character game piece 1 outside the playing zone, allows a player to give commands 25 to their battle game pieces 8, for example as described in the two-player rules of Example 1.

Or alternatively said commands causing the battle game pieces 8 of the player to be moved to pre-selected locations on the game board.

It will thus be seen that the objects set forth above, among those made apparent from the
5 preceding description, are efficiently attained, and since certain changes may be made in carrying out the above method and in the constructions set forth without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention, it is intended that all matter contained in the above description or shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

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It is also to be understood that the following claims are intended to cover all of the generic and specific features of the invention herein described and all statements of the scope of the invention which, as a matter of language, might be said to fall therebetween.